

Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up – October 29, 2018

Each week, the Ad Hoc Group Weekly Round Up will feature hashtags and/or tweets (follow us at [@fundNIH](#)) suggested by members of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) advocacy community. We encourage all readers who are active on social media to use these messages, and we welcome suggestions from the community for future issues of the Weekly Round Up. Here is this week's featured tweet:

Francis S. Collins [@NIHDirector](#)

Looking for something different to get you in the Halloween spirit? [Try this](#) very cool fly-through of a mouse skull! [#NIH](#)

1. Sen. Grassley Asks NIH About Foreign Researchers, Affiliations with US Research

Senator Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) Oct. 23 [sent a letter](#) to NIH Director Francis Collins, MD, PhD, with questions regarding threats from foreign entities to the U.S. biomedical research enterprise, as detailed by Dr. Collins in an Aug. 23 [statement](#) on protecting research integrity. In his letter, Sen. Grassley asks about NIH's vetting process for foreign researchers stating, "it is not clear that these disclosure requirements adequately address the significant and pervasive threats posed by foreign entities to our research institutions and the integrity of taxpayer funded studies."

2. *Nature*: China Hides Identities of Top Scientific Recruits Amidst Growing US Scrutiny

An Oct. 24 [Nature news release](#) details mounting fear in the Chinese research community as the U.S. government increases its investigation of foreign threats to U.S. biomedical research. The Chinese recruitment program Thousand Talents Plan has removed names of participating researchers from its website, while a Chinese grant-funding agency "instructs interviewers of potential applicants to avoid e-mail correspondence, and not to mention the Thousand Talents Plan when inviting candidates back to the country," reportedly for Chinese researchers to avoid being targeted by the FBI.

3. HHS, NIH Officials Participate in Milken's Future of Health Summit 2018

The Milken Institute hosted a 3-day summit Oct. 22-24 on the Future of Health. Participants included three officials from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS Secretary [Alex Azar](#) gave updates on the opioid crisis; NIH Director [Francis Collins](#), MD, PhD, spoke about the importance of diversity in biomedical research and the importance of the All of Us Research Program; and National Institute on Drug Abuse Director [Nora Volkow](#), MD, participated in a panel discussion and shared her thoughts on the disease of addiction, and what more can be done to combat addiction in the U.S.

4. NHLBI to Pause CONCERT-HF Trial

The NHLBI Oct. 29 released a [press statement](#) regarding its decision to pause the CONCERT-HF trial for patients with chronic heart failure. The statement notes, "Recent calls for the retraction of journal articles in related fields of cell therapy research have raised concerns about the scientific foundations of this trial. While none of the articles in question derive from the CONCERT-HF trial itself, the NHLBI convened CONCERT-HF's Data and Safety Monitoring

Board (DSMB) out of an abundance of caution to ensure the study continues to meet the highest standards for participant safety and scientific integrity.”

5. Amazon Web to Join NIH STRIDE Initiative

The NIH Oct. 23 [announced](#) a new partnership with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to provide cloud-based technology to NIH-funded researchers participating in the Science and Technology Research Infrastructure for Discovery, Experimentation, and Sustainability (STRIDES) Initiative. The press statement notes that “the agreement with AWS will help NIH researchers, as well as researchers at more than 2,500 academic institutions across the nation receiving NIH support, make use of AWS’s wide range of technologies.” NIH Chief Information Officer and Director of NIH’s Center for Information Technology Andrea Norris added, “Teaming with Amazon Web Services will give NIH researchers powerful cloud-based resources to more efficiently collaborate and analyze data ... [allowing] us to provide the research community access to the tools they need to advance science.”

6. NIH To Issue New FOA For Basic Science Studies Involving Humans

The NIH Oct. 26 [issued a notice](#) that it intends to publish a series of new parent funding opportunity announcements (FOA) for "prospective basic science studies involving human participants" as defined in a [previous notice](#). The first FOA is expected in late November 2018, and relates to studies that meet both the NIH definition of a clinical trial and also the definition of basic research. NIH is currently soliciting input on reporting standards for such studies through [a separate RFI](#).

Upcoming Hill Briefings and Events

7. PCORI Annual Meeting – Oct. 31- Nov. 2

Join colleagues from across the health care community at PCORI's fourth Annual Meeting, an opportunity to learn more about PCORI-funded studies of which care options work best for whom, based on outcomes patients care about. PCORI’s Annual Meeting brings payers together with patients, caregivers, researchers, providers, employers, and others to explore how we can create a health care system that provides greater value to all. There is no registration fee for this year's event. Please visit the [meeting website](#) to register and view a detailed schedule.

8. NIH Webinar on Data Sharing Proposed Provisions – Nov. 7

The NIH [will host a webinar](#) for the Request for Information (RFI) on Proposed Provisions for a Draft NIH Data Management and Sharing Policy on Wednesday, Nov. 7 from 11:30am-1pm.

9. Research!America Post-Election Briefing – Nov. 8

Join Research!America for a briefing on Thursday, Nov. 8, 2018 from 10:00-11:30 a.m. ET as we look at the impact of mid-term election outcomes on the 116th Congress and implications for U.S. research and development (R&D). There is no fee to attend, but registration is required. [Click here](#) to see a detailed agenda and to register.

10. NASEM: Meeting on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Academia – Nov. 9

The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) will [convene leaders](#), including “academic leaders, Title IX and diversity officers, ombudsmen, researchers in sexual harassment, and leaders from professional societies, foundations, and federal agencies, to discuss strategies and share promising practices” to discuss sexual harassment in academia. The meeting will be held Nov. 9, 2018, from 9:00am – 5:00pm at the National Academies in Washington DC and will focus on developing strategies on how to prevent sexual harassment in academia.

11. Learn Serve Lead – Nov. 2-6, 2018

Learn Serve Lead 2018 - the AAMC Annual Meeting - is open for registration. The Nov. 2-6 event takes place in Austin, Texas, and will draw 4,500-plus attendees including a wide range of stakeholders. In addition to [four plenary sessions](#), including Grit author and researcher Angela Duckworth, PhD, and civil and women’s rights leader Anita Hill, JD, there are more than 130 concurrent sessions. Some of the slated sessions include:

- Improving Population Health Through Learner-Engaged Research
- Rightsizing Research Infrastructure
- Achieving Health Equity through Research: Innovations From NIMHD-Funded Science
- Unhealthy Politics: The Battle over Evidence-Based Medicine

[Registration](#) is available online through Thursday, Nov. 1.

Please Note: If you have information of interest to the NIH advocacy community that you would like to share with the Ad Hoc Group, please forward it to Christa Wagner at chwagner@aamc.org or Tannaz Rasouli at trasouli@aamc.org.